

Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A fluorescent adapter, comprising
 - a housing including a tip contact compatible with an electrical socket,
 - a threaded ring contact compatible with the electrical socket, the ring contact surrounding the housing and rotatable with the housing when the housing is rotated in a first direction and not rotatable with the housing when the housing is rotated in an opposite direction, and
 - a fluorescent ballast supported by the housing and having input electrodes in electrical contact with the tip contact and the ring contact, respectively, and output electrodes for removably receiving the contact pins of a fluorescent lamp.
2. The adapter of claim 1, further comprising a drive member on the housing for engaging the ring contact when the housing is rotated in the first direction during insertion of the adapter into the electrical socket and for disengaging from the ring contact when the housing is rotated in the opposite direction.
3. The adapter of claim 2, wherein the drive member is integrally molded into the housing.
4. The adapter of claim 2, wherein the drive member includes at least one tooth for engaging the ring contact when the housing is rotated in the first direction.
5. The adapter of claim 4, wherein the ring contact includes at least one opening for receiving the tooth when the housing is rotated in the first direction.

6. The adapter of claim 2, wherein the drive member comprises a disc having at least one tooth and the ring contact includes at least one opening for receiving the tooth when the housing is rotated in the first direction.

7. The adapter of claim 6, wherein the at least one opening is an arcuate slot.

8. A fluorescent adapter, comprising

a housing including a tip contact compatible with an electrical socket,

a threaded ring contact compatible with the electrical socket, the ring

contact surrounding the housing and rotatable with the housing when the housing is rotated in a first direction and not rotatable with the housing when the housing is rotated in an opposite direction,

a fluorescent ballast supported by the housing and having input electrodes in electrical contact with the tip contact and the ring contact, respectively, and output electrodes for removably receiving the contact pins of a fluorescent lamp, and

a drive member on the housing for engaging the ring contact when the housing is rotated in the first direction during insertion of the adapter into the electrical socket and for disengaging from the ring contact when the housing is rotated in the opposite direction,

wherein the drive member comprises a disc having at least one tooth and the ring contact includes at least one arcuate slot for receiving the tooth when the housing is rotated in the first direction.

9. A compact fluorescent lamp assembly, comprising

a fluorescent lamp having contact pins,

a housing including a tip contact compatible with an electrical socket,

a threaded ring contact compatible with the electrical socket, the ring contact surrounding the housing and rotatable with the housing when the housing is rotated in a first direction and not rotatable with the housing when the housing is rotated in an opposite direction, and

a fluorescent ballast supported by the housing and having input electrodes in electrical contact with the tip contact and the ring contact, respectively, and output electrodes for removably receiving the contact pins of the fluorescent lamp.

10. The compact fluorescent lamp assembly of claim 9, further comprising an enclosure removably attached to the ballast for enclosing at least the fluorescent lamp.

11. A fluorescent adapter, comprising
a housing including a tip contact compatible with an electrical socket,
a threaded ring contact compatible with the electrical socket, the ring contact encircling the housing and freely rotatable relative to the housing when the housing is rotated in a first direction, and

means for preventing relative rotation between the ring contact and the housing when the housing is rotated in a second direction opposite the first direction to insert the adapter into the socket.

12. A method of non-removably inserting a fluorescent adapter into an electrical socket comprising the steps of
providing a threaded ring contact surrounding and freely rotatable on an adapter housing,
preventing relative rotation between the ring contact and the housing when the housing is rotated in a first direction to insert the adapter into the socket, and

permitting free relative rotation between the ring contact and the housing when the housing is rotated in a second direction opposite the first direction.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the step of preventing relative rotation further comprises

engaging a slot in the ring contact with a projection on the housing, and thereafter rotating the ring contact in the first direction together with the

housing.